Rama Varmha Tampuran.—Unless I look into the particular circumstances I cannot say definitely whether he was correct or he was not correct. It is more a hypothetical question to which an answer cannot be given.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon.—May I know the impossibility in publishing this correspondence?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—Generally correspondence conducted with officers of other Governments is not published as a matter of course.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Where is the impossibility?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—The impossibility is in the impropriety in publishing these letters.

Mr. K. M. Ibrahim.—Wherein lies the impropriety?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—There is an ultimate end for answering questions.

Mr. K. M. Ibrahim.—You are making a mere categorical assertion.

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—It is not possible to explain matters further.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Is there any rule prohibiting the publication of correspondence between our State and an officer outside?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—In these matters there are no rules to regulate the activities of the Government. It is absolutely a matter of discretion of the Government to publish any correspondence which they have in their possession or to withhold it from the public. It is purely a matter of discretion, not only in this instance but in all other instances.

Mr. K. M. Ibrahim.—Is there not a particular reason?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—The reason I explained is that it is improper. That is the real reason for it.

Mr. K. M. Ibrahim.—Is it not a change in the words?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—If the Hon'ble Member thinks that it is a change in the words he is at liberty to take it in that light.

Rat Flea survey in British Cochin.

303. **Mr. Popatlal Goverdhan Lalan.**—Will the Government be pleased to State:—

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(a) whether they are aware that the Research Officer to Government of Madras conducted a rat flea survey in British Cochin;

(b) if so, what was his opinion after the survey and what were his recommendations;

(c) as a direct result of the above, what are the steps taken by the British Cochin authorities in the matter of steps to check the spread of the infection to human beings either in their own jurisdiction or from their jurisdiction to their adjoining other jurisdictions?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—(a) Yes.

(b) From the report of the Sub-Collector, British Cochin, it is gathered that the Plague Research Officer was apparently of opinion that plague did not spread to human beings owing to the fact that only a small percentage (10%) of the "Xemopsylla cheopis" flea (the kind which carries plague most) was present. Government have no information of the recommendations, if any, he made in the matter.

(c) Government have no information on the subject.

Mr. Popatlal Goverdhan Lalan.—May I know whether there was necessity for the Government to enquire and find out the preventive measures that were being taken in the adjoining British part or from the experts outside?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—We are not bound to enquire what action the British Cochin Municipality took in the matter.

Mr. Popatlal Goverdhan Lalan.—Is it not an advisable method to enquire what preventive measures are adopted outside from the experts in those territories?

Rama Varmha Tampuran. — There have been no doubts with regard to the particular measures to be adopted to combat this evil. On that point the Government had ample information. They enquired of nobody else because they have got their own expert officers. Never had they any necessity to take expert opinion from outside.

Mr. K. G. Nayar.—Had our Government the benefit of a perusal of the report of that research officer?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—No, we had not.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Is it not the opinion of the British Officer that plague did not spread to human beings?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—Yes.

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Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Why is it certain portions alone are published?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—It is at the discretion of the Government to publish. If they think that these papers could be published without impropriety they will do it. They are always anxious to oblige the House as much as possible. Sometimes it is not possible to do that and therefore Government are constrained to withhold it.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar.—Did our Government conduct any research?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—No, we did not conduct any research work on the subject.

Mr. K. M. Ibrahim.—Are we to take it that the information contained in the correspondence, if published, will be critical of any section of the Government? Is it the reason ?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—No.

Mr. K. M. Ibrahim.—Even if it is published it will be a compliment?

Rama Varmha Tampuran.—There is no question of compliment or criticism.

Disinfection of commodities transported.

304. Mr. Popatlal Goverdhan Lalan.—Will the Government be pleased to state:—

(a) who are all the Municipal Bodies or such other bodies who have so far written to our State authorities suggesting strict disinfection of commodities despatched to their stations;

(b) Whether any commodities are being brought into Mattancheri from the above such areas in the ordinary course of business?

Dr. D. Raghavendra Rao.—(a) None.

(b) Does not arise in view of answer to (a).

Mr. Popatlal Goverdhan Lalan.—In the absence of any request from the other municipal authorities and such other bodies, may I know why the Government wanted to disinfect all the commodities in Mattanchery?

Dr. D. Raghavendra Rao.—It is in order to prevent the spread of the disease among the public of Mattancherry that this was done.

Mr. Popatlal Goverdhan Lalan.—Is it the custom in British India and other places to disinfect all the commodities that are stored?

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